

REMARKS

Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 7-10 and 12-20 are pending in this application.

Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 7-10, 12-14, and 17-20 presently rejected.

Claims 15, 16 stand objected to but allowable if rewritten.

Claims 1, 5, 8, 10, 17, and 19 have been rewritten to overcome the objections of the Office.

Applicants thank Examiner Pam Rodriguez for her time yesterday in discussing the issues at hand, the scope of the reference, and how the concerns of the Office may be addressed suitably to achieve allowance.

Further to this discussion, applicants have amended to note the following items.

Claim 10 has been amended to re-insert the phrase “hinge” on line 6, previously deleted. It is proposed that this amendment is sufficient to respond to the claim objection raised in paragraph 2 of the action.

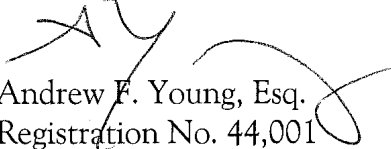
Independent claims 1, 5, 8, 10, 17, and 19, currently rejected under §102, have been amended as agreed to specify and clarify the following matters in accordance with the agreement with the Office to achieve allowance:

- (A) That applicant’s front and rear faces are on opposing front and rear face sides of the elastomeric member and perpendicular to the axis of the central opening. It was agreed that, in combination with the below details and other amendment, this literal requirement substantially assists in avoiding the Siebert interpretation which has (as asserted by the office) front and rear faces on the same side (e.g., “as visible in Figure 2, ...”). Suitable amendments are in the independent claims to confirm this detail.
- (B) That the present flanges extend substantially across the entire width of the outer face side portions of the elastomeric member (absent the flat bottom of course), and between said first and second sides of said elastomeric member, thereby creating the saddle portion therebetween. Suitable amendments are in the independent claims to confirm this detail.

In view of the above amendments and comments, Applicant respectfully submits that the claims, as amended, are not anticipated by Siebert for at least the reasons previously discussed between the Examiner and applicant. The prompt mailing of a Notice of Allowance is therefore respectfully requested.

No fees are believed due with this submission, however, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge the extension fee, and any additional fees necessary for the consideration of this Amendment, or to avoid abandonment of this application, to Deposit Account No. 10-0100 (Dkt. No. RESEM.P003).

Respectfully Submitted,


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